Canadian National Institute for the Blind

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OBJECT: To Ameliorate the Condition of the Blind of Canada

36 King St. East, Toronto, Ont.,
May 19th, 1919.

To the Members of the American Association of Workers for the Blind and Delegates to the 1919 Convention of the Association.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

You will find enclosed herewith the following:

1. Copy of Bulletin No. 8 for the month of May of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. The Institute is to be our host at the coming Convention, and is giving a considerable portion of the space in this Bulletin to Convention matters as well as enclosing a copy of the preliminary programme to its readers. It has been felt that the Members of the Association who are not on the Institute's regular mailing-list might be interested in this sample copy of the Bulletin.

2. A copy of the preliminary programme for Convention. Every effort has been made to secure interesting speakers and live topics, and the Executive Committee will be much disappointed if the programme fails to prove one of keen interest to those who attend.

3. A statement regarding entrance to Canada of those who are not citizens of the Dominion.

4. A statement regarding the proposed trip to Niagara, Saturday, June 28th.

Your attention is earnestly drawn to the following matters of importance. Please communicate with me at your earliest convenience after reaching decision upon the following points:

1. Are you coming to this Convention?

2. If so, is any one coming with you who will not be communicating with me directly? and if so, give his name and other information concerning him on the same basis as concerning yourself.

3. What day and what hour do you expect to arrive?

4. By what port of entry do you expect to reach Canada? If this is not technically known to you, a mention of the route by which you are coming, with the name of the last large point on the American side which is your objective, as, for instance, Buffalo, through which probably most of the American delegates will come, will probably enable me to work this out from this end.

5. If you are a citizen of any other country than Canada, so state, with name of country, in order that the card approved by the Department of Immigration may be filled out and sent you for use at the border as elsewhere mentioned.

6. If, being a citizen of some other country than Canada, you do not expect to leave Canada within the time specified on the card approved by the Immigration Department, copy of text of which is elsewhere shown, please so state in order that the Officers of the Association may be relieved of the onus of giving false testimony on your behalf.

7. Shall you desire to avail yourself of the accommodations for lodging or meals, either or both, which have been secured by the Committee on the University of Toronto premises?

8. Do you expect to take the Niagara trip on Saturday, June 28th, description of which is given elsewhere?

GENERAL INFORMATION.

Toronto is about four hours' run from Buffalo; the fare is Three Dollars and Sixty-Five Cents ($3.65); trains leave almost hourly; so that good connection is reasonably assured at all times except in the middle of the night. Both the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway connect the two cities.

It is probable that delegates from the United States, from almost all parts, will find it quite as convenient to come through Buffalo as by any other possible route. Those whose natural point of convergence is nearer to their respective starting-points than Buffalo itself - such as Chicago, New York or Boston - will find it quite direct to proceed from any of these points to Buffalo and thence to Toronto.

Another excellent way of reaching Toronto is by boat from Charlotte, which is the port of Rochester. Boats leave Charlotte at 10.30 p.m., arriving in Toronto at 7 p.m. The fare one way is $3.30; round-trip $5.60; berth $1.50 extra.

It is entirely practical for those coming from the New England or the Atlantic Coast States to enter Canada over the Boston-Maine and the Canadian Pacific roads through Montreal; or for those from the Pacific Coast, or who would care to include the Pacific Coast en route, to come up the coast by rail or water to Vancouver or Victoria, and thence through the Canadian Rockies, getting some of the grandest scenery on this Continent, taking in such celebrated points of interest as the Fraser Canyon, the Kicking-Horse Pass Lake Louise, Banff, as well as the Western cities of Canada, such as Calgary, Winnipeg, etc.

On leaving Toronto, a most admirable trip which may be suggested for the interest of those desiring to combine Convention with holiday, would be down the St. Lawrence River, through the Thousand Islands, as far as Montreal or even Quebec City, thence by rail through the so-called "French Country" to Sherbrooke, which is the northern terminus of the Boston & Maine. Scenes and customs as quaint to the eyes of the city-bred American as anything that would be seen in southern Europe will be noted in passing through this district.

Again those who have come through Vancouver may, if they choose, continue by rail to Halifax, thus spanning the width of the Great Dominion from coast to coast by rail, and thence, if so disposed, may take the boat from Halifax to Boston; while those wishing to drop off from the Niagara trip at any point touched en route of that excursion, will be at liberty to do so and proceed on their way from thence without returning to Toronto.

Sufficient has been said to suggest the great variety of scenery and possibilities of an interesting holiday which may be combined with attendance at the Convention. These possibilities are so numerous, and the uncertainty of a large enough party coming from any given point to make it possible to get excursion rates so great, that the Executive Committee has decided not to make any attempt to plan for excursion rates or special parties en route to or from Toronto; but merely for the special Convention excursion to Niagara on Saturday, 28th.

We are glad to announce that arrangements have been made for the holding of our Conferences in the Auditorium of the Physics Buildings of the Toronto University; for the housing of our guests as follows: Single women in Queen's Hall (a girls' dormitory of the University), single men, in the South Men's Residence, and married couples, in the east Men's Residence; and for the comfort of the inner man, at Burwash Hall (the dining-hall of Victoria College).

All these buildings are on, or immediately adjacent to the premises of the University of Toronto (Victoria College being affiliated with the University), so that we are assured of comfortable quarters and convenient location, as well as excellent service.

The University of Toronto is one of the largest educational institutions in Canada. It has magnificent buildings and beautiful grounds bordering Queen's Park, which also contains the Ontario Parliament House and other Government buildings. The immediate environs of Queen's Park are largely occupied by churches, libraries, hospitals and other public buildings, and by high-class private residences. We shall be off the immediate route of the street cars, although readily accessible to them; thus, although in the heart of a big city, we shall be assured of comparative quiet, of fine air, and plenty of room, and will be to a large extent a family party by ourselves in the same sense in which we have been at our former Conventions.

The rates for these accommodations are: for residence Three Dollars for Convention week. Guests may come on Monday and leave on Saturday if they choose. There will be no extra charge for so doing, and no reduction if their stay is shorter: for eleven meals, from Tuesday mid-day meal to Friday evening meal inclusive, the charge will be Seven Dollars. Those wishing meals in Toronto before and after those above specified will find plenty of opportunity for securing them at restaurants, cafes, hotel dining-rooms, etc., in the City. Burwash Hall closes about a month before our Convention date, and the authorities are very kindly re-opening and bringing back their helpers in order to accommodate us. The straggling demand for meals likely to occur before and after the above schedule does not seem sufficient to warrant their having the Hall in operation for this purpose except as above, especially as the Committee on Arrangements would be entirely unable to give any idea of the number requiring meals Monday or Saturday.

Miss Davis and Mrs. Swift will be in attendance as hostesses, representing the Hospitality Committee at Queen's Hall, and the East Residence, respectively, and Mr. Swift, as host, at the South Residence. These members of the Hospitality Committee will direct guests to their rooms, etc., etc. Kindly ask for the host or hostess of your building, as per above indication, upon your arrival there.

INSTRUCTIONS.

Members of the Hospitality Committee will wear badges similar to those which will be furnished to members and delegates who notify me that they are coming to Convention, except that they will be white, instead of blue. We will endeavour to have one or more members of the Hospitality Committee at the Union Station, Toronto, and at the dock, at the arrival of the boats from Charlotte, if we receive notice that any are coming by that way. If you see a man or woman wearing this badge of identification, do not hesitate to make yourself known if you are missed by the wearer of the white ribbon, who will, however, endeavour to be the first to identify you. Do not hesitate to ask information or assistance from these Committee members, who will be there for the purpose of rendering all the help they possibly can. They will direct you to your quarters on University premises.

But, in case anyone should chance to get by the observation of a member of the Hospitality Committee, or arrive by a train that is not met, please observe the following instructions: Go to the corner of York and Front Streets, one block from the Union Station, and take a College car. Leave this car at University Avenue. From University Avenue proceed on foot to the dormitories, as per assignment indicated under the preceding caption.

Note - Important.

Do not leave train at any other station than the Union Station.

Hoping that the largest possible number of those receiving this communication, and their friends, whose addresses may not be known to me, who should also be with us, may find it possible to come to the Convention, and will feel fully rewarded for so doing.

I remain,

Yours truly,

C. W. HOLMES.

P.S.- (added at proof-reading)

Within a few hours of this dictation, word has been received from Mr. C. W. Lindsay, Montreal, of his generous and courteous desire to entertain the "Conventionites" at a supper during Convention week. At his request, I have immediately made arrangements with the management of the King Edward Hotel for a supper at 6.30, Wednesday evening, June 25th, in the large banquet hall of the Hotel, where connections for the use of a lantern are installed and a screen is available. We will, therefore, be able to enjoy our Wednesday evening programme - illustrated lecture by Mr. Campbell - without adjourning back to the University premises. I am thanking Mr. Lindsay on your behalf for his invitation, as well as accepting it. I shall expect you to do the rest Wednesday night.

CWH/D C.W.H.